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Economic and Social Council

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United Nations Forum on Forests
Open-ended intergovernmental ad hoc expert group established pursuant to paragraph 48 of Economic and Social Council resolution 2015/33
First meeting
New York, 25-27 April 2016

Provisional agenda and annotations

Provisional agenda

1. Opening of the meeting.
2. Election of the Co-Chairs.
3. Adoption of the agenda and other organizational matters.
4. Tasks of the expert group.
5. Other matters.
6. Adoption of the report of the expert group on its first meeting.

Annotations

1. Opening of the meeting

The meeting will be opened by the Chair of the Bureau of the eleventh session of the United Nations Forum on Forests.

2. Election of the Co-Chairs

The expert group may wish to elect the two nominated candidates, one representing the North and the other the South, as the Co-Chairs of the open-ended intergovernmental ad hoc expert group on the development of proposals on matters referred to in paragraph 44 of Economic and Social Council resolution 2015/33.

3. Adoption of the agenda and other organizational matters

The expert group may wish to consider and adopt its agenda and programme of work.

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4. Tasks of the expert group

In carrying out its tasks, the expert group will be guided by Economic and Social Council resolution 2015/33, in which the Council established a working group and an open-ended intergovernmental ad hoc expert group. In accordance with paragraph 48 of the resolution, the expert group will conduct up to two meetings in 2016, subject to the availability of extrabudgetary resources, to develop and submit proposals to the working group on the matters referred to in paragraph 44 of the resolution, namely: (a) the replacement of the reference to the Millennium Development Goals in paragraph 1 (b) of the non-legally binding instrument on all types of forests with an appropriate reference to the Sustainable Development Goals and targets; and (b) the strategic plan for the period 2017-2030 and the quadrennial programme of work for the period 2017-2020, consistent with section XI of the resolution. In developing proposals for the strategic plan, the expert group will take into account the views and proposals submitted by Member States and relevant stakeholders, as well as paragraphs 13 (b), 37, 38, 39 and 40 of the resolution and the outcomes of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development, the United Nations summit for the adoption of the post-2015 development agenda and the twenty-first session of the Conference of Parties of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

Documentation

Note by the Secretariat on matters referred to in paragraph 44 of Economic and Social Council resolution 2015/33 (E/CN.18/AEG/2016/2)

Background document commissioned by the Secretariat on the suggested elements for the strategic plan of the international arrangement on forests for the period 2017-2030

Compilation of views and proposals from Member States and other relevant stakeholders on the matters referred to in paragraph 44 of Economic and Social Council resolution 2015/33 on the international arrangement on forests beyond 2015

References

Report of the United Nations Forum on Forests on its eleventh session (E/2015/42)

Report of the Secretary-General on critical milestones towards coherent, efficient and inclusive follow-up and review at the global level (A/70/684)

Annex to resolution 69/313 of the General Assembly, entitled "Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development"

Resolution 70/1 of the General Assembly, entitled "Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development"

Resolution 2015/33 of the Economic and Social Council, entitled "International arrangement on forests beyond 2015"

5. Other matters

The expert group may wish to discuss and make recommendations on other matters relating to its work.

6. Adoption of the report of the expert group on its first meeting

The expert group may wish to adopt its report, which should contain a summary by the Co-Chairs of proposals on matters referred to in paragraph 44 of Economic and Social Council resolution 2015/33. The report will be submitted to the expert group at its second meeting and will serve as a background document for the meetings of the working group.

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Economic and Social Council

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United Nations Forum on Forests
Open-ended intergovernmental ad hoc expert group established pursuant to paragraph 48 of Economic and Social Council resolution 2015/33
First meeting
New York, 25-27 April 2016
Item 4 of the provisional agenda*
Tasks of the expert group

Matters referred to in paragraph 44 of Economic and Social Council resolution 2015/33

Note by the Secretariat

Summary

In accordance with paragraph 48 of Economic and Social Council resolution 2015/33, the open-ended intergovernmental ad hoc expert group was established to develop proposals on matters referred to in paragraph 44 of the same resolution. That includes proposals on: (a) replacement of the reference to the Millennium Development Goals in the non-legally binding instrument on all types of forests (United Nations forest instrument) with an appropriate reference to the Sustainable Development Goals and targets; and (b) the strategic plan for the period 2017-2030 and the quadrennial programme of work for the period 2017-2020. The expert group is expected to develop and submit its proposals for consideration by the working group of the United Nations Forum on Forests. The present note provides an overview of recent developments that are relevant to the work of the expert group, as well as other background information. The note also outlines some of activities that have been carried out by the Secretariat and inputs that have been prepared in preparation for the first meeting of the expert group.

* E/CN.18/2016/AHEG/1.

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I. Introduction

1. In July 2015, the Economic and Social Council adopted resolution 2015/33 on the international arrangement on forests beyond 2015. The resolution was negotiated and agreed upon by consensus during the eleventh session of the United Nations Forum on Forests in May 2015.

2. The present note provides an overview of recent developments that are relevant to the work of the open-ended intergovernmental ad hoc expert group, as well as other background information. The note also outlines some of the activities that have been carried out by the Secretariat and inputs that have been prepared in preparation for the first meeting of the expert group.

II. Background

3. The Economic and Social Council, in its resolution 2015/33, decided to strengthen the international arrangement on forests and extend it to 2030. Actions taken to strengthen the arrangement included clearly defining its composition. The components of the international arrangement are the United Nations Forum on Forests and its member States, the secretariat of the Forum, the Collaborative Partnership on Forests, the Global Forest Financing Facilitation Network and the Forum's Trust Fund.

4. The objectives of the international arrangement, according to resolution 2015/33, are to: (a) promote the implementation of sustainable management of all types of forests, in particular the implementation of the non-legally binding instrument on all types of forests; (b) enhance the contribution of all types of forests and trees outside forests to the post-2015 development agenda; (c) enhance cooperation, coordination, coherence and synergies on forest-related issues at all levels; (d) foster international cooperation, including North-South, South-South and triangular cooperation, as well as public-private partnerships and cross-sectoral cooperation at all levels; and (e) support efforts to strengthen forest governance frameworks and means of implementation, in accordance with the non-legally binding instrument on all types of forests, in order to achieve sustainable forest management.

5. The resolution also states that the Forum shall continue to be a subsidiary body of the Economic and Social Council with universal membership. The core functions of the Forum beyond 2015 are to: (a) provide a coherent, open, transparent and participatory global platform for policy development, dialogue, cooperation and coordination on issues related to all types of forests, including emerging issues, in an integrated and holistic manner, including through cross-sectoral approaches; (b) promote, monitor and assess the implementation of sustainable forest management, in particular the non-legally binding instrument on all types of forests and the achievement of its global objectives on forests, and mobilize, catalyse and facilitate access to financial, technical and scientific resources to that end; (c) promote governance frameworks and enabling conditions at all levels to achieve sustainable forest management; (d) promote coherent and collaborative international policy development on issues related to all types of forests; and (e) strengthen high-level political engagement, with the participation of major groups and other stakeholders, in support of sustainable forest management.

6. A number of additional decisions were taken to improve and strengthen the functioning of the Forum. They included agreement to develop a strategic plan for the period 2017-2030 for the Forum to carry out its core functions, with quadrennial programmes of work beginning with the period 2017-2020. The Forum also decided to change its meeting schedule from biennial sessions of 10 working days to annual sessions of five working days. Under the new schedule, sessions held in odd years will focus on implementation and technical issues, while sessions held in even years will focus on policy issues. Furthermore, high-level segments (not exceeding two days in duration) are mandated to take place during sessions of the Forum, as required.

7. In its resolution 2015/33, the Economic and Social Council reaffirmed the continued validity and value of the non-legally binding instrument on all types of forests, including its global objectives on forests, and decided to rename the instrument "United Nations forest instrument" and extend the timeline of the global objectives on forests to 2030 in line with the post-2015 development agenda.[1] The Council also recommended that the General Assembly adopt those changes during its seventieth session and no later than December 2015. Subsequently, the Assembly adopted resolution 70/199, which gave effect to changes recommended by the Council.

8. Through the above-mentioned resolution, the Council also decided to strengthen and make the facilitative process more effective through: (a) changing the name of the facilitative process to "Global Forest Financing Facilitation Network"; (b) setting clear priorities for the Network in the strategic plan; (c) prioritizing its work to promote the design of national forest financing strategies to mobilize resources for sustainable forest management; (d) also prioritizing its work to serve as a clearing house on existing, new and emerging financing opportunities and as a tool for sharing lessons learned from successful projects; (e) enhancing the capacity of the secretariat to effectively and efficiently manage the Network; and (f) strengthening collaboration with the Collaborative Partnership on Forests in implementing the activities of the Network.

9. The Economic and Social Council also made several decisions on monitoring, assessment and reporting, strengthening the secretariat of the Forum and the Collaborative Partnership on Forests, enhancing engagement of regional entities and major groups in the work of the Forum, the post-2015 development agenda and its interlinkages with the international arrangement on forests beyond 2015, provisions for the midterm review of the international arrangement, the strategic plan for the arrangement, and the follow-up activities to the eleventh session of the United Nations Forum on Forests.

[1] The phrase "post-2015 development agenda" was used consistently in Economic and Social Council resolution 2015/33. That phrase was used owing to the fact that the negotiations on the post-2015 development agenda had not yet been concluded by the time of the eleventh session of the United Nations Forum on Forests. In September 2015, the United Nations summit for the adoption of the post-2015 development agenda officially concluded the negotiations on that agenda and adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. In this context, all references to the post-2015 development agenda in resolution 2015/33 refer to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

III. International arrangement on forests beyond 2015, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

10. In the Ministerial Declaration adopted by the United Nations Forum on Forests at its eleventh session, the Ministers invited the Third International Conference on Financing for Development to give appropriate consideration to the issue of financing for forests and sustainable forest management as one of the priorities. In addition, the Conference and the United Nations summit for the adoption of the post-2015 development agenda,[2] among others, were invited to consider the Ministerial Declaration to be the contribution of the Forum to the outcomes of those events.

11. Several paragraphs of Economic and Social Council resolution 2015/33 also emphasize the strong interlinkages and the need for coherence of the international arrangement on forests beyond 2015 and the post-2015 development agenda. According to paragraph 1 (d) (ii) of the resolution, one of the objectives of the strengthened international arrangement on forests is to enhance the contribution of all types of forests and trees outside forests to the post-2015 development agenda.

12. Paragraph 8 of the resolution contains the decision of the Economic and Social Council to extend the timeline of the global objectives on forests to 2030, in accordance with the timeline of the post-2015 development agenda. In paragraph 10 of the resolution, Member States are urged to utilize the United Nations forest instrument as an integrated framework for national action and international cooperation for implementing sustainable forest management and forest-related aspects of the post-2015 development agenda.

13. As an additional function, the secretariat of the Forum, in paragraph 17 b (iv), is mandated to work within the United Nations system to support countries in aligning forests and the international arrangement on forests with the post-2015 development agenda. The Collaborative Partnership on Forests is also tasked, in paragraph 20 (d), to promote the contribution of forests to the post-2015 development agenda as part of its functions. The Council also invites regional and subregional entities to develop or strengthen programmes on relevant aspects of the post-2015 development agenda, and to provide coordinated inputs and recommendations to sessions of the Forum.

14. Section X of the resolution, which contains paragraphs 34 to 37, is specifically devoted to the relationship of the Forum and the post-2015 development agenda. The Council stressed the need to ensure coherence and consistency between the international arrangement on forests and the post-2015 development agenda as well as with multilateral forest-related agreements. It also decided that the Forum should offer to contribute to the implementation, follow-up and review of the forest-related aspects of the post-2015 development agenda, including its forest-related goals and targets. It affirmed that the Forum should offer to contribute to the work of the high-level political forum on sustainable development, and invited the Forum to consider, in the context of its strategic plan, its role in and contribution to the implementation of the post-2015 development agenda.

[2] The outcome document of the summit is called "2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development".

15. The outcome documents of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development,[3] as well as the United Nations summit for n the adoption of the post-2015 development agenda,[4] prominently feature forests. The following sections highlight the most relevant outcomes of those important events, as they relate to forests, and to the work of the Forum. More specifically, these outcomes have to be analysed and digested in order to identify the necessary actions and measures for inclusion in the strategic plan of the international arrangement on forests beyond 2015. Such analysis is important to ensure consistency and coherence with the post-2015 development agenda and other major processes, as requested by the Economic and Social Council in resolution 2015/33.

A. Addis Ababa Action Agenda

16. Paragraph 13 of the Addis Ababa Action Agenda on scaling up efforts to end hunger and malnutrition states that Member States will support sustainable agriculture, including forestry, fisheries and pastoralism. That paragraph also refers to the Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests. Moreover, in paragraph 63 of the document, Member States encourage the mobilization of financial resources from all sources to conserve and sustainably use biodiversity and ecosystems, including promoting sustainable forest management. Mobilization of financial resources for sustainable forest management is a central task to achieve target 15 (b) of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Finally, in paragraph 92 of the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, Member States recognize that illegal logging is a challenge for many countries.

B. 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

17. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development provides a broad and universal policy agenda and contains 17 Sustainable Development Goals with 169 associated targets. These goals and targets, which are integrated and indivisible (paragraph 18), become effective on 1 January 2016 and will guide the decisions and actions countries take over the next 15 years. The outcome document of the Addis Ababa Conference is also an integral part of the new 2030 Agenda, which includes a concrete review and follow-up process and measures on the progress in the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals.

18. While forests contribute and are affected by all Sustainable Development Goals, the 2030 Agenda contains specific Goals and targets on forests, namely: Goal 15: "Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss"; target 15.1: "By 2020, ensure the conservation, restoration and sustainable use of terrestrial and inland freshwater ecosystems and their services, in particular forests, wetlands, mountains and drylands, in line with obligations under international agreements"; target 15.2: "By 2020, promote the implementation of sustainable management of all types of

[3] Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development (General Assembly resolution 69/313).

[4] Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (General Assembly resolution 70/1).

forests, halt deforestation, restore degraded forests and substantially increase afforestation and reforestation globally"; and target 6.6: "By 2020, protect and restore water-related ecosystems, including mountains, forests, wetlands, rivers, aquifers and lakes".

19. In the light of the objectives of the international arrangement on forests beyond 2015, and the specific mandates and functions of various components of that arrangement, the United Nations Forum on Forests, the secretariat of the Forum and the Collaborative Partnership on Forests have particular roles to play in assisting countries to achieve the above goals and targets.

B.1. Sustainable Development Goals and targets on means of implementation for forest

20. In the Sustainable Development Goal targets, forests have a specific target on means of implementation. Target 15 (b) is set to: "Mobilize significant resources from all sources and at all levels to finance sustainable forest management and provide adequate incentives to developing countries to advance such management, including for conservation and reforestation". Paragraph 40 of the new Agenda also states that the means of implementation targets under Goal 17 and under each Sustainable Development Goal are key to realizing our Agenda and are of equal importance with the other Goals and targets. Goal 17 is a cross-cutting sustainable development goal and is set to "strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development".

21. Target 17.9 is also set to "Enhance international support for implementing effective and targeted capacity-building in developing countries to support national plans to implement all the sustainable development goals, including through North-South, South-South and triangular cooperation".

22. The United Nations Forum on Forests has a long history of advocating for greater and enhanced means of implementation for sustainable forest management. One of the most important decisions and new mandates emanating from Economic and Social Council resolution 2015/33 is the establishment of the Global Forest Financing Facilitation Network. This mandate is consistent with the Forum's core objective of catalysing and facilitating access to financial, technical and scientific resources to implement the United Nations forest instrument and sustainable forest management. Specifically, the Global Forest Financing Facilitative Network of the United Nations Forum on Forests is working to mobilize and facilitate access to new and additional financial resources for sustainable forest management; promote effective use of existing financial resources for sustainable forest management; facilitate and assist in the development of national forest financing strategies; serve as a clearing house on existing, new and emerging financing opportunities; and facilitate transfer of environmentally sound technologies and capacity-building.

B.2. United Nations inter-agency task team on science, technology and innovation for the Sustainable Development Goals

23. In accordance with paragraph 70 of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the task team is an integral component of the technology facilitation mechanism created in Addis Ababa and in Agenda 2030. It will promote coordination, coherence and cooperation within the United Nations system on matters related to science, technology and innovation, enhancing synergy and efficiency, in particular to

enhance capacity-building initiatives. The task team will be open to the participation of the functional commissions of the Economic and Social Council, and the Department of Economic and Social Affairs is part of its composition. The team will organize the Multi-stakeholder Forum on Science, Technology and Innovation, which is another key component of the Technical Facilitation Mechanism, along with an online platform.

24. The secretariat of the United Nations Forum on Forests will also be involved in supporting the task team in two ways: in its capacity as part of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, and in its capacity as the secretariat of a functional commission of the Economic and Social Council (United Nations Forum on Forests), on matters related to the relevant Sustainable Development Goals and targets, namely: Goal 15, Goal 17 and targets 6.6, 15.1, 15.2, 15 (b) and 17.8.

B.3. Multi-stakeholder Forum on Science, Technology and Innovation for the Sustainable Development Goals

25. In accordance with paragraph 70 of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Multi-stakeholder Forum on Science, Technology and Innovation for the Sustainable Development Goals will be convened once a year to discuss cooperation on science, technology and innovation around thematic areas, congregating all relevant stakeholders to actively contribute in their areas of expertise. It will facilitate interaction between relevant stakeholders and multi-stakeholder partnerships in order to identify and examine technology needs, gaps and development, transfer and dissemination of relevant technologies for the Sustainable Development Goals. The summary of the Forum will be an input into the meetings of the high-level political forum on sustainable development, the central follow-up and review platform at the global level.

26. The deliberations of the United Nations Forum on Forests are also expected to support the Multi-stakeholder Forum on matters related to the relevant Sustainable Development Goals and targets, namely: Goal 15, Goal 17 and targets 6.6, 15.1, 15.2, 15 (b) and 17.8.

B.4. Global indicators framework and data

27. One major area of work that is common to both the international arrangement on forests beyond 2015 and the 2030 Agenda is the work on indicators and data on forests. According to paragraph 75 of the 2030 Agenda, a set of global indicators should be developed by the Inter-agency and Expert Group on Sustainable Development Goal Indicators, and to be agreed by the United Nations Statistical Commission by March 2016.

28. In paragraph 57 of the new Agenda, Member States also commit themselves to address the gap in baseline data for several of the targets and call for increased support for strengthening capacity of data collection in Member States. Specifically, target 17.18, as a cross-cutting target, is set to: "By 2020, enhance capacity-building support to developing countries, including for least developed countries and small island developing States, to increase significantly the availability of high-quality, timely and reliable data disaggregated by income, gender, age, race, ethnicity, migratory status, disability, geographic location and other characteristics relevant in national contexts".

29. Supporting the inter-agency work to develop a global indicators framework in 2016 and the subsequent follow-up on this matter, as well as strengthening the capacity of countries on forest and forest-related data, are important aspects that could be included in the strategic plan for the international arrangement on forests, in particular in regard to the work of the secretariat of the United Nations Forum on Forests and some other members of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests.

B.5. Follow-up, review and effective support to the high-level political forum

30. Paragraph 47 of the new Agenda states that the high-level political forum, under the auspices of the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council, will have the central role in overseeing follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda at the global level. In paragraph 72, Member States also committed themselves to engaging in systematic follow-up and review of the implementation of the new Agenda over the next 15 years.

31. The systematic follow-up and review under the high-level political forum will be done through specific means, including thematic reviews and national reviews. The forum will also be informed by an annual progress report on the Sustainable Development Goals prepared by the Secretary-General in cooperation with the United Nations system and by the report on global sustainable development.

32. According to paragraph 85 of the new Agenda, the thematic reviews of progress on the Sustainable Development Goals, including cross-cutting issues, will take place at the high-level political forum. These reviews will be supported by reviews by the functional commissions of the Economic and Social Council and other intergovernmental bodies and forums "which should reflect the integrated nature of the Goals as well as the interlinkages between them".

33. In a recent report to the General Assembly,[5] the Secretary-General explores how to put in place a coherent, efficient and inclusive follow-up and review system at the global level, within the mandates outlined in the 2030 Agenda. That report also highlights the role and contributions of the functional commissions of the Economic and Social Council to the work of the high-level political forum in following up, reviewing and implementing the 2030 Agenda.

34. The United Nations Forum on Forests, as a functional commission of the Economic and Social Council, and the Forum's secretariat are expected to contribute to the follow-up and review of the forest-related goals and targets of the 2030 Agenda by the high-level political forum. In addition, as part of the United Nations system, the secretariat of the Forum is also expected to contribute to the relevant reports for the high-level political forum.

35. The Forum is expected to integrate the 2030 Agenda into its work. Discussions by the expert group on the strategic plan of the international arrangement on forests and the first quadrennial programme of work of the United Nations Forum on Forests provide an important opportunity to ensure that the work of the Forum is mutually supportive of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. In this regard, it would be important to include a standing item on the contribution of the international arrangement on forests to the follow-up, review and implementation of the forest-related Sustainable Development Goals and targets of the 2030 Agenda, in

[5] Report of the Secretary-General on critical milestones towards coherent, efficient and inclusive follow-up and review at the global level (A/70/684).

the agenda for future sessions of the Forum. Depending on the requests for input by the high-level political forum, the outcome of the Forum's deliberation under this agenda item can accordingly be communicated to the high-level political forum.

IV. Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change

36. On 12 December 2015, at its twenty-first session, the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change adopted the Paris Agreement by decision 1/CP.21. The text of the Paris Agreement is contained in the annex to that decision. The backbone of the Agreement is the intended nationally determined contributions. In the framework of the Paris Agreement, each Party to the Agreement has to communicate its own intended nationally determined contributions, i.e., its commitment to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 2025-2030, through implementing its contributions. The intended nationally determined contributions may include mitigation and/or adaptation measures, addressing sources of the greenhouse gas emissions or enhancing greenhouse gas sinks and reservoirs.

37. It is well recognized that the world's forests play a critical role in addressing climate change. Reductions in deforestation and forest degradation can result in lower greenhouse gas emissions and more sequestered carbon. Since the thirteenth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, held in Bali in 2007, there has been increased recognition of the role of forests in reducing greenhouse gas emissions. That led to the gradual development and expansion of the scope of forest-based climate change mitigation actions in the context of reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation in developing countries (REDD+). Forests are also well recognized for their role in adaptation. Conserving and enhancing forests strengthens resilience for the climate and for communities.

38. Article 5 of the Paris Agreement specifically integrates forest-based climate change mitigation and adaptation measures in the operational scheme of the Agreement. Article 5.1 states that Parties should take action to "conserve" and "enhance" sinks and reservoirs of greenhouse gases, including forests. That provides a legal basis to require Parties to "conserve" and "enhance" ecosystems when taking intended nationally determined contributions to address climate change. Article 5.2 encourages "implementation" and "support", among others, of REDD+, and alternative policy approaches such as joint mitigation and adaptation approaches for integral and sustainable management of forests. It also reaffirms the importance of non-carbon benefits of forests.

39. Article 5 reflects a positive response by the twenty-first session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change to the invitation made in the Ministerial Declaration[6] adopted by the United Nations Forum on Forests at its eleventh session. In addition, consideration of all benefits of forests, whether carbon or non-carbon, and policies and approaches that ensure integral and sustainable management of forests, and the need for an integrated approach to all types of forests have been a long and consistent call by

[6] See paragraph 15 (c) of the Ministerial Declaration.

the United Nations Forum on Forests and are a core component of the Forum's overall mandate. According to paragraph 10 of Economic and Social Council resolution 2015/33 on the international arrangement on forests beyond 2015, the United Nations forest instrument provides an integrated framework for national action and international cooperation for implementation of the sustainable forest management. In this regard, article 5 of the Paris Agreement provides a sound basis for substantive future collaboration between the Framework Convention and the Forum, in furthering integrated sustainable management of forests through advancing implementation of the forest instrument. To this end, Parties to the Paris Agreement could be encouraged to include implementation of the provisions of the forest instrument in their intended nationally determined contribution. In that regard, States members of the Forum could also report on forest-related action of their intended nationally determined contributions, as part of their national reports to the Forum. Such measures would substantively, and concretely, promote coherence among international instruments and processes.

40. On the issue of forest financing there are multiple opportunities for collaboration and cooperation. Given the mandate of the Global Forest Financing Facilitation Network under the international arrangement on forests, and the mandate of the Green Climate Fund (GCF) and the Global Environment Facility (GEF) under the Paris Agreement, and more specifically in regard to its article 5,[7] options could be explored to more systematically link the activities of the Network to GCF and GEF. This is an important consideration for the "Implementation Review Framework" of the strategic plan of the international arrangement on forests, as well as the priorities of the Network. Moreover, the involvement of the secretariat of the United Nations Forum on Forests and other member organizations of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests in the work of the Standing Committee on Finance of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change could be further enhanced to promote coherence and synergy between the work of the United Nations Forum on Forests and the Framework Convention on issues related to forest financing.

41. Another important area for promoting coherence between the work of the international arrangement on forests and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change is in the context of the "Global Stocktake" under the Paris Agreement. Under article 14 of the Paris Agreement, Parties agree to periodically take stock of the implementation of the Paris Agreement, to assess collective progress towards achieving the purpose of this Agreement and its long-term goals. The first global stocktaking will be in 2023 and every five years thereafter. The outcome of the global stocktaking will inform Parties in updating and enhancing their intended nationally determined contributions, as well as in enhancing international cooperation for climate action. Given that the midterm review of the international arrangement on forests will take place in 2024, the outcome of the first global stocktaking under the Paris Agreement would be an important input to the review process of the international arrangement on forests and its work until 2030.

42. Under decision 1/CP.21 and the Paris Agreement, it was also agreed to develop a capacity-building workplan for the period 2016-2020.[8] This workplan, when it is ready, can help members of the United Nations Forum on Forests to seek a better

[7] See paragraphs 52-64 of decision 1/CP.21 on finance.

[8] See paragraphs 71-83 of decision 1/CP.21 and article 11 of the Paris Agreement.

coherence on capacity-building issues with the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, in the strategic plan of the international arrangement on forests and the quadrennial programme of work.

43. In the light of the above, both Economic and Social Council resolution 2015/33 and decision 1/CP.21 and its annex (Paris Agreement) contain several provisions that could potentially lay the foundation for increased coherence between the strategic plan of the international arrangement on forests and the Paris Agreement, and collaboration between the United Nations Forum on Forests and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. These may provide some ideas for consideration of the expert group in its discussion and preparation of the arrangement's strategic plan, and the first quadrennial programme of work of the Forum.

V. Tasks of the expert group

44. In the context of activities to be undertaken after the eleventh session of the United Nations Forum on Forests, the Economic and Social Council, in paragraph 48 of its resolution 2015/33, established an open-ended intergovernmental ad hoc expert group. The Group is expected to conduct up to two meetings in 2016, to develop proposals on the matters referred to in paragraph 44 of the same resolution, namely: (a) replacement of the reference to the Millennium Development Goals in paragraph 1 (b) of the non-legally binding instrument on all types of forests with an appropriate reference to the Sustainable Development Goals and targets; and (b) the strategic plan for the period 2017-2030 and the quadrennial programme of work for the period 2017-2020, consistent with section XI of resolution 2015/33.

45. In accordance with paragraph 46 of resolution 2015/33, the Council also established a working group of the Forum to develop proposals on the aforementioned matters. The outcome of the work of the expert group should be submitted for consideration to the Forum's working group, which should be convened no later than March 2017. According to paragraph 50 of the resolution, the outcome of the Forum's working groups is going to be considered by a special session of the Forum, which will be convened immediately following the adjournment of the final meeting of the Forum's working group.

46. According to paragraphs 38 and 39 of the above-mentioned resolution, the strategic plan of the international arrangement on forests shall be concise and shall serve as a strategic framework to enhance the coherence of, and guide and focus the work of, the arrangement and its components. The strategic plan should be aligned with the objectives of the arrangement and should incorporate a mission and vision, the global objectives on forests and forest-related aspects of the post-2015 development agenda, taking into account significant forest-related developments in other forums, as well as identify the roles of different actors and the framework for reviewing implementation, and outline a communication strategy to raise awareness of the work of the arrangement.

47. In performing its tasks, the expert group should also take into full account paragraphs 13 (b), 37 and 40 of resolution 2015/33, as well as the outcomes of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development (July 2015), the United Nations summit for the adoption of the post-2015 development agenda (September 2015), and the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations

Framework Convention on Climate Change (December 2015). Accordingly, the strategic plan of the international arrangement on forests should also include: (a) clear priorities for the Global Forest Financing Facilitation Network; (b) contribution of the Forum to the implementation of the post-2015 development agenda; and (c) a quadrennial programme of work for 2017-2020 with priority actions and resource needs.

48. To facilitate an effective discussion, the expert group has before it views submitted by Member States, major groups and other stakeholders,[9] as well as a background document on suggested elements for the strategic plan of the international arrangement on forests for the period 2017-2030, which was commissioned by the Secretariat.

[9] Compilation of views and proposals from Member States and relevant stakeholders on the matters referred to in paragraph 44 of Economic and Social Council resolution 2015/33 (E/CN.18/AEG/2016/INF/1).